

Environmental Issues : Ethnic groups in Tha Madue village, Kanchanaburi province, Thailand

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Abstract

The educated environmental issues : a case study of ethnic groups is to study how to educated the environment to the youth and the children in Tha-Madue village, to examine the ecological system and community adaptation related to natural resources .

The study employed qualitative research. They were in-depth interview, focused group discussions and participatory observation.

Nowadays, the environmental is more important. However but more than that is how to live with it smartly. Findings of the study are as follow 1)Tha-Madue village is a community of peoples who were forced to migrate from the area of the Vajiralongkorn Dam Construction Site in Kanchanaburi Province in 1984. Before they used to live beside the Kwai - Noi river. They lived with the variety of ethnic groups, so there were cultural diversities for living together. The sub-groups were Tai Lue, Tai-Yuan, Karen, Mon and people from other provinces. The new community that they settled in surrounding of the National Park is 72 years Queen SIRIKIT and the Park of Industry Forestry of Thailand. 2) Among their lacking living, they have to learned survival. The education have changed to new dimensions, by the way the student are lead to the low land forest around community to study by themselves. Monk teach them in the temple how to live with environment by Dharma subject. And the scholar in community teach by local wisdom knowledge.

have many knowledge that is parallel
emic knowledge.

Key words: Kanchanaburi province, Tha Madue village,
ethnic groups, environment

Introduction

Tha Madue is a name of a small village in Thong Pha Phum District, Kanchanaburi province . It located in south western Thailand, which is a part of the Thai western forest. Over the last six decades. This district was famous for its richness in mineral resources, such as tin and wolfram as well as a large stretch of fertile forest. There are many forest types in this area, i.e. tropical rain forest, dry evergreen forest, dry mixed deciduous forest and hill evergreen forest (Royal Forest Department, n.d.) and this area is a border line of Myanmar and Thailand so that many people immigrated to this area. After the Second World War, there was a low demand for tin and wolfram, followed by a series of reductions in prices of these metals in the world market. (Apirada Sathapattayanon and Thaweesakdi Boonkerd, 2006 : 1)



Figure 1. The map shows border of Thailand and Myanmar

At this time, Tha Madue village has various ethnic groups, they immigrated because the former community was constructed the dam, so many ethnic groups have to immigrated to other area. From the aforementioned information it is my interesting to investigate the how to ethnics group apply for their life . And I want to know how do they learn with new environment especially for the children

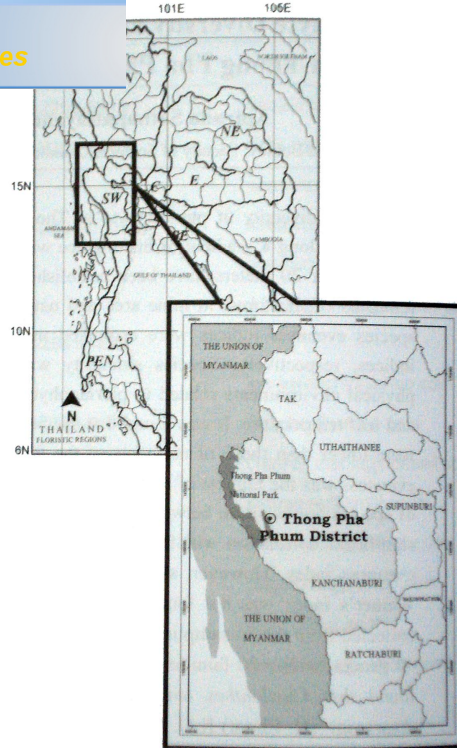


Figure 2. Locations of Thong Pha Phum District and Thong Pha Phum National Park.

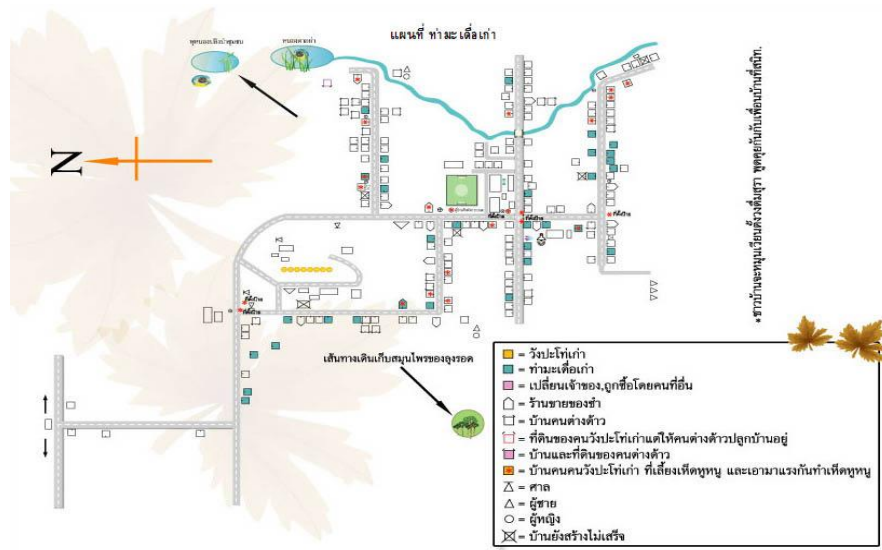


Figure 3. The map of Tha Madue village

Methodology

This study is a qualitative research. Data is derived from 1) in-depth interview 2) focus group discussion 3) participatory observation 4) SWOT analysis and 5) life history analysis. Findings are as follows:

Results

Tha Madue village was settled by people previously living at where Vajiralongkorn dam is now located. This village is now in Huai Kayeng sub district, Kanchanaburi province. The settlement of this village was in 1984 by land allocation policy of the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT). There were various cultures because many ethnic groups lived together in this village. These ethnic groups consist of Tai Yuan, Karen, Tai Lue and people from other provinces.

Cultural capital of the former community was regarded to beliefs and nature of the people concerning natural resources. Nowadays, community has changed due to the innovation and the development from the outsiders. Therefore, the ideology of community members' participation and that of problem solving by community beliefs are able to manipulate people to conserve community culture. Therefore, youth and students is the most appropriate group to be concerned.

Tha Madue and Wang Pato village in Sangkla Buri district was the first homeland community. Many ethnic groups living together acculturated their ways of life. In the past, people living here were ethnic groups migrating from many provinces:- Tak, Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Phrae and others from the north part of Thailand. These people leaved there homeland where the lived since the early of Rattanakosin dynasty era. They moved to the west border of Thailand, Kanchanaburi province, 60 years ago. In present, villagers are Karen, Tai Yuan, Tavoy and foreigners

yanmar). Tavoy is a sub group in this border of Thailand and Myanmar.



Figure 4.The Karen women are making brooms



Figure 5.The children of various ethnic groups

All of ethnic groups can live together and they have acculturated especially of the youth or children in community.

was settled among unfamiliar environment which was rather different from their former community. The former community stands on the Kwai-Noi River. So they are able to reach a useful of plant or fish in river. Now they have marshes (Nong ta ya) for breeding a fish and set a water ceremony . In the community they are many swampy forest (Phu Nong Ping and Phu Tha Madua). The swampy forest support the youth to clear educate. They study the biodiversity from this area. This environmental site help the people to subsistence but the more useful is to preserve the biodiversity. The new type of crab ð Queen crabö is discovered here also. ðPu óRajiniö or queen crab is only found in this area. This kind of beautiful colored crab becomes a symbol of this community.



Figure 6. Participatory learning with a natural environment

The program that educates border policemen and university students are organized by the cooperation of government and non-government called Biodiversity Research and Training Program ó BRT.

youth and children to search for training to strengthen the community.

Srinakarinwirot University (SWU) is one of the academic institutions responsible for youth education in this community. First, the youth was encouraged to talk about sources of environment by many techniques:- focus group discussion, SWOT analysis, in-depth interview and participation observation. Second, youth had aroused to draw a picture with A-I-C technique and to tell their idea to adult. Indeed, the youth have a particular knowledge about the types of natural environment and the useful of them. They learned together with other ethnic groups so they can share experiences how to use a part of plant. Last, the most important in this community is how to live with each other and aware to conserve environment. The providing education changed the student to have new perspectives. Moreover, students were led to the low land forest around community to study by themselves. Monks taught student in the temple how to live together with environment by Dharma subject. The scholars in community taught students by local wisdom knowledge. As a result, the knowledge the youth covered is somewhat parallel to their ways of life and knowledge from schooling.



Figure 7. Learning local intellectuals with the local people

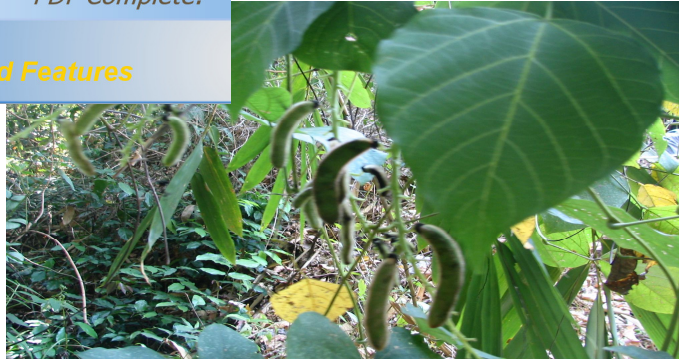


Figure 8-9 . Learning the natural environment



Figure 10. Group activities with A-I-C technique



Figure 11. Groups activities with A-I-C technique

Conclusion

Nowadays, the education for the children should emphasize on the self-educated approach and learning from surrounding environment. In this study, it found that the children from various ethnic groups know many kinds of plants and animals living surround their community. The transformation of knowledge among those children enabled them to understand the nature of plants and animals. Moreover, they can exchange the knowledge with other ethnic groups. As a result, the children can apply it in their dairy lives. They can improve their lives on food security. In summary, the education on environment will encourage the maintenance of ethnic groupsø knowledge on natural resources. The existing of knowledge should be realized by the children and others. It will inherit from generation to generation and will exchange among the ethnic groups.

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Reference

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